Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/063,661	GODDARD ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Jegatheesan Seharaseyon, Ph.D	1647	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to *4/27/06*.

2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are *6-8 and 11-13*.

3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
   a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
      1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
      2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .
      3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

   * Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.

5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
   (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
      1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
   (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

   Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date 4/27/06
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____ .
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

CHRISTINE J. SAOUD
PRIMARY EXAMINER
Christine Saoud

DETAILED ACTION

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 4/27/2006 has been entered. An action on the RCE follows.

2. Claims 6-8 and 11-17 are pending.

Information Disclosure Statement

3. The IDS submitted on 4/27/06 has been considered. The references submitted previously and considered have been lined thru.

Priority

4. Applicants are entitled to a priority date of 8/24/2000 based on the enabling disclosure of the differential mRNA expression in normal and tumor tissues disclosed in PCT/US00/23328.

5. Any objection or rejection of record, which is not expressly repeated in this action, has been overcome by Applicant's response and withdrawn.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

6. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided

by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with AnneMarie Kaiser on 7/27/06.

In the claims:

Please cancel claims 14-17.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

7. The claims of the instant invention are directed to an isolated polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: 136. The specification provides several asserted utilities at page 93, including that the PRO polypeptides of the present invention may be differentially expressed in a diseased tissue as compared to a normal tissue of the same tissue type.

Applicant states at page 7 of their response that the gene expression data in the specification, Example 18, shows that the mRNA associated with the PRO1926 polypeptide was more highly expressed in normal esophagus tissues compared to esophageal tumor tissues. Gene expression was analyzed using standard semi-quantitative PCR amplification reactions of cDNA libraries isolated from different human tumor and normal human tissue samples. Identification of the differential expression of the PRO1926 polypeptide-encoding gene in tumor tissue compared to the corresponding normal tissue renders the molecule useful and enabled as a diagnostic tool for the determination of the presence or absence of tumor.

Example 18 at page 140 of the instant specification demonstrates differential expression of PRO1926 cDNA using quantitative PCR amplification reactions.

DNA82340-2530 was shown to be more highly expressed in normal esophagus tissues compared to esophageal tumor tissues in this Example. Applicant states at pages 7-8 of the response that Example 18 utilizes a more accurate and reliable method of assessing changes in mRNA levels, namely quantitative PCR analysis. Applicant relies on more than 140 references (see IDS filed 04/27/06), where expression levels of mRNA, measured by quantitative PCR, were found to have a good correlation to the expressed protein levels.

It had been previously argued in the Office Actions and Examiners Answer mailed on 1/11/05, 6/22/05 and 2/23/06 that mRNA levels were not predictive of protein levels, citing references by Haynes et al., Gygi et al., and Chen et al. However, these references were measuring and analyzing mRNA levels using microarrays, not using quantitative PCR analysis and the art recognizes that the results obtained by microarray are not always the same as the results obtained using quantitative PCR (for example, see Oda et al. Virchows Arch. 430: 99-105, 1997, specifically page 104, column 1, paragraph 2). While the PTO found several references in which the protein expression levels did not correlate with mRNA levels measured by quantitative PCR (see Sugg et al., Clinical Endocrinology 49: 629-637, 1998; Toler et al., Am. J. Obstet. Gynecol. 194: e27-e31, 2006; Berner et al. Histopathol. 42 : 546-554, 2003 ; Brooks et al. Am. J. Physiol. Renal Physiol. 284: F218-F228, 2003), the majority of the references which were found, including those cited by Applicant, demonstrated a correlation between mRNA levels measured by quantitative PCR and protein expression levels.

Applicant asserts that the expression levels of protein correlate to mRNA (cDNA) levels when the cDNA is measured by quantitative PCR (i.e. RTPCR). Applicant has provided more than 140 references in support of this position. The prior art of record (Haynes et al., Gygi et al., Chen et al.), argued by the Examiner, is not specifically directed to message levels measured by RTPCR. Based on the totality of evidence of record, one of skill in the art would find it more likely than not that an increase in message as measured by RTPCR would be predictive of an increase in protein expression levels, absent evidence to the contrary. Therefore, the data presented in Example 18, which demonstrates differential expression of nucleic acids encoding PRO1926, also supports a conclusion of differential expression of the PRO1926 polypeptide. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would be able to use the PRO1926 polypeptide diagnostically for distinguishing normal esophagus tissues compared to esophageal tumor tissue, as asserted by Applicant.

8. Claims 6-8 and 11-13 are allowed.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jegatheesan Seharaseyon, Ph.D whose telephone number is 571-272-0892. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F: 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brenda Brumback can be reached on 571-272-0961. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

JS 08/06

CHRISTINE J. SAOUD
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Christine J. Saoud